

violence is another type of infection

I move one of the cats off the chair  
so I can sit down  
he then walks over to a sleeping cat  
& attempts to knock her off her perch  
it reminds me  
of my paperboy days downtown  
there was an older kid  
who used to give me some of his papers  
he was a nice kid  
I repaid him one afternoon  
by kneeling him in the nuts  
for no reason  
other than curiosity  
he was writhing on the sidewalk  
a man came along to loosen his pants  
things were never the same between us  
around that same time  
I had another friend  
who came over quite often  
we shot pool  
did our homework together  
one day I punched him in the back  
hard  
again for no apparent reason  
today it makes sense  
there was a lot of hostility  
directed my way  
it came from my father & sister  
& from some guy who was living with us  
it also came from some of the kids at school  
I simply passed it along  
as wrong as that was

war means peace to the third power

it's all very well to speak of subtrahends  
& planets lined up in Capricorn  
peace usually means that you're not at war  
we irritate each other  
to an unbearable degree  
but it isn't polite to say so  
which means it's impossible to be honest  
& get away with it